

Visitor Activities

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Mesa Verde National Park



November 1, 2015 to March 5, 2016

2016
National Park Service
CENTENNIAL



Above Spruce Tree House

Welcome

Winter is a special time to visit Mesa Verde National Park and there are many activities available to help you experience this magical place. Step back in time by visiting the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum to see an Ancestral Puebloan turkey-feather winter boot; join a free ranger-guided tour of Spruce Tree House and experience the warmth of a kiva; drive the Mesa Top Loop Road and watch for deer making their way through the snow; or enjoy a variety of cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking opportunities in the quiet winter environment.

Winter Logistics

All activities depend on road and weather conditions. Please check with a ranger before beginning any of the listed activities. We recommend good hiking boots or snow boots, warm layered clothing, a hat, gloves, snacks, and water.

Guide booklets are available at the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum and at sites along the Mesa Top Loop Road. Limited food service is available at the Spruce Tree Terrace, near the museum, from 11:00 am to 3:30 pm. There is no overnight lodging in the park, but accommodations are available in nearby communities. For additional park information, tune your radio to AM 1610.

Visit Spruce Tree House

[Spruce Tree House](#) is Mesa Verde’s best-preserved cliff dwelling and *the only cliff dwelling open during the winter*. Free, ranger-guided tours are offered daily:

November 1, 2015 to February 20, 2016

10:30 am, 1:00 pm, and 3:00 pm

February 21, 2016 to March 5, 2016

10:00 am, 1:00 pm, and 3:30 pm

Dress warmly and meet the ranger at the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum five minutes before the tour. The trail to Spruce Tree House is a 1/2-mile (1 km) winding, paved trail that includes a steep 100-foot (30 m) descent and ascent. The trail is moderately strenuous and may be icy.

Spruce Tree House and the museum are a 45 to 60 minute drive from the park entrance.

*Spruce Tree House is open daily (weather permitting) except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. It will be open on a self-guided basis during periods of high visitation when staffing and weather allows.



Spruce Tree House Trail

Visitor and Research Center

[Mesa Verde National Park Visitor and Research Center](#) is located at the park entrance and serves as the park’s primary facility for orienting visitors to opportunities within the park and surrounding area. This LEED® (*Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*) facility also houses a state-of-the-art research and storage facility for the park’s archives and museum collection of over three million objects.

*The Mesa Verde Visitor Center is open daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

*Entrance fees will be collected here from January 10, 2016 through March 5, 2016



Welcome Plaza, Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center

Explore On Your Own

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum and Store

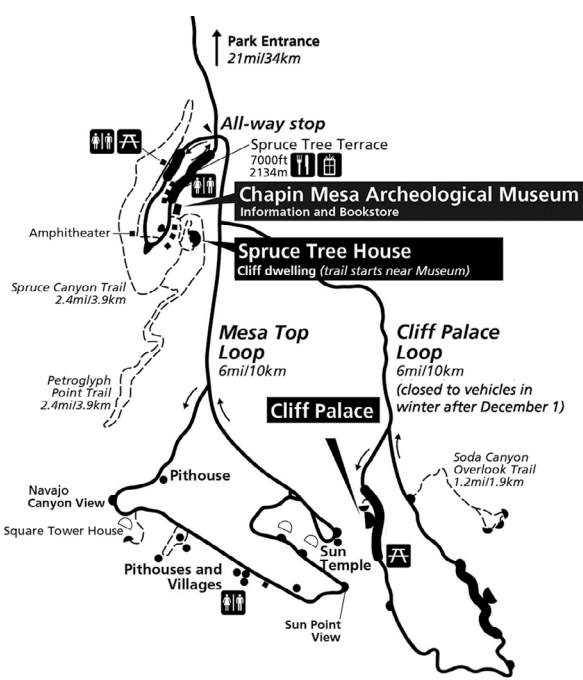
will help you gain insights into the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people. The museum is located 20 miles (33 km) south of the park entrance. A 25-minute park video is shown every half hour. The museum and store are open daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

Mesa Top Loop Road is a six-mile (10 km) drive with short paved trails to view 12 easily-accessible archeological sites, including surface sites and cliff dwelling overlooks. Highlights include views of Square Tower House and Cliff Palace. Open daily 8:00 am to sunset.

Petroglyph Point Trail is located near the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. The 2.4-mile (3.9 km) trail leads to a panel of petroglyphs. In clear weather, the trail can be hiked as a loop. However, due to ice and snow, you may be directed to hike via the mesa top section of the trail, or the entire trail may be closed. Ask a ranger at the museum for trail conditions and to register for the hike.

Cliff Palace Loop Road is open to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, or hiking. No vehicles are permitted after December 1.

Far View Sites Complex includes Far View House plus four other villages and a dry reservoir. Four miles (6.4 km) north of the museum, this 3/4-mile (1.2 km) trail is not plowed. Park just outside the gate, but do not block the gate. Open 8:00 am to sunset.



Winter Recreational Opportunities are available for Nordic skiing and snowshoeing once there is an appreciable amount of snow and the park has begun to groom trails. To find out what winter trails are open, call 970-529-4622 or 970-529-4631.

Snowshoes are available for loan at the Visitor Center and Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum.

Ask for maps, descriptions, and trail conditions at the Visitor Center or Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. This information is also available on the [winter activities](#) page of the park website.

Visitor Services

Mesa Verde National Park
1-970-529-4465 www.nps.gov/meve

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum
1-970-529-4631
November 1, 2015 to February 20, 2016
9:00 am to 4:30 pm
February 21, 2016 to March 5, 2016
9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center
1-970-529-5037
November 1, 2015 to March 5, 2016
8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Aramark, Park Partner
1-800-449-2288 www.visitmesaverde.com

Spruce Tree Terrace Gift Shop and Café
November 1, 2015 to March 5, 2016
11:00 am to 3:30 pm (limited menu)

Mesa Verde Museum Association, Park Partner
1-970-529-4445 www.mesaverde.org

Museum Store
November 1, 2015 to February 20, 2016
9:00 am to 4:30 pm
February 21, 2016 to March 5, 2016
9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Visitor Center Store
November 1, 2015 to February 20, 2016
9:00 am to 4:30 pm
February 21, 2016 to March 5, 2016
8:30 am to 4:30 pm

U.S. Postal Service, near the museum
November 1, 2015 to March 5, 2016
8:30 am to 3:00pm, Monday to Friday

*All visitor services are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

Protect the Park

Help Mesa Verde preserve its archeological sites and natural environment for future generations.

- Please do not sit, stand, climb, or lean on fragile archeological structures.
- Pets must be leashed at all times; only service animals are allowed in public buildings or on trails.
- Do not leave pets unattended.
- Help keep wildlife wild. It is illegal to feed, capture, chase or tease wildlife.
- Camping and overnight parking is not permitted.



Protect Yourself

In case of emergency, call 911

Road Advisory

- Obey all traffic signs
- Watch for falling rocks
- Gasoline is not available in the park
- Check sign at park entrance for possible chains or snow tire requirements. Watch for snowplows.

High Elevation

- Mesa Verde ranges from 7,000 feet elevation to 8,572 feet at Park Point; the air is thin and very dry.
- Consider your physical health before participating in any activity.
- Carry and drink plenty of water.